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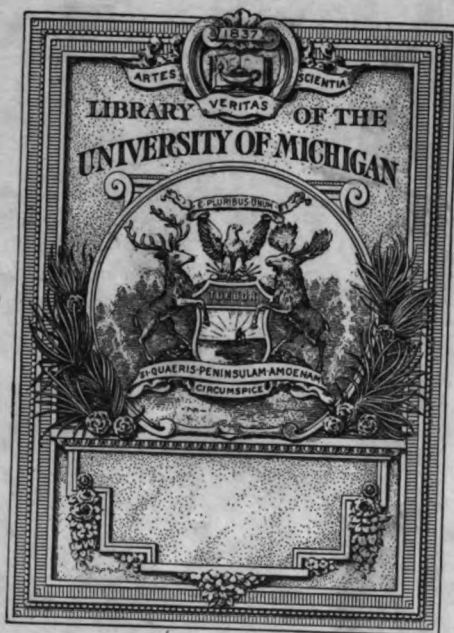
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## *In memory of William F. King*

Commerce and Industry Association  
of New York, Merchants' Association of New York







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WILLIAM F. KING

In Memory of  
**William F. King**

**Addresses delivered at a Memorial Meeting  
on May 12th, 1909, in the Assembly  
Room of The Merchants' Association  
of New York; together  
with a Biographical Sketch**

**Published by  
The Merchants' Association  
of New York  
1909**



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Address by Henry R. Towne

President of The Merchants'  
Association of New York



E are met to do honor to the memory of a man who honored this community, this Association, and himself, by his high sense of civic duty, by his earnest and effective services to the public, and by his devotion to the cause for the promotion of which he and others organized The Merchants' Association, namely, "To Foster the Trade and Welfare of New York."

The visitor to London's Great Cathedral, St. Paul's, is shown in its crypt the simple tomb of its illustrious architect, Sir Christopher Wren, on the wall above which is inscribed the legend "si monumentum requiris, circumspice"—If thou askest for his monument, look about thee. And so of William F. King it may fittingly be said in this place, "If you seek his monument, look about you," for the useful and militant organization in whose home we are met is in

the truest sense a monument to his finest traits and to his best creative powers.

Among the significant signs of the times is the growing recognition of the fact that the moral obligation of the citizen to the state or community in which he dwells, especially if under its aegis he has prospered, does not end with the payment of taxes, but should include personal service or financial aid in support of practical movements for the promotion of the public welfare. In this sense and in this service William F. King was a leader in his time, not only in the affairs of this city, but also of this state and of this nation;—not only in the affairs of business and of commerce, but also in those of philanthropy, of education, of public welfare, and of civic righteousness. He was a man of many sides, of many aptitudes, and of many gifts, but of single purpose in his devotion to duty and his desire to do good in the community in which he lived. A busy and successful merchant, he found time to apply himself to public and civic affairs with a devotion which entitles him to lasting gratitude, and an ability which won lasting victories. This great city in which he spent his life, and of which we are so justly proud, is a greater and a better city because of what he did in it and for it. On us who survive devolves the duty of carrying forward the work which he so well began.

Others will speak of his work in its other phases, but on me, as his successor in the

office he so ably filled, devolves the duty of indicating in some brief measure the character and scope of his work in, and for, the Merchants' Association.

He was its founder and chief organizer, and in 1897 became its first President. In his farewell address when resigning the presidency, in June, 1901, he outlined his views as to its functions as follows:

"My views of the extent to which an Association truly representative of this city's business and property interests might and should influence public affairs were and are far wider than the nominal purpose for which the Merchants' Association was organized. It has served that purpose which relates directly to trade faithfully and well, but it has done very much more than that; and I firmly believe that it has shown the people of this city the usefulness of such a public organ. I have for many years had the earnest conviction that a purely commercial organization, largely directed toward restraining the waste of the people's money and properly shaping public outlays, would greatly benefit the city's commercial and property interests."

During the four years of his administration the Association expended \$266,000 in the conduct of its work, and collected over \$200,000 additional for relief work in Galveston, Jacksonville, Porto Rico, and elsewhere. The greatest achievement in its history

was its long but successful fight against the great Ramapo scheme of plunder, which cost the Association some \$40,000, towards which Mr. King advanced \$22,000 from his personal means (afterwards repaid), and which saved the taxpayers of this city more than One Hundred Million Dollars.

Among the many other activities of the Association under Mr. King's leadership may be mentioned the following, viz :

It secured the equalization of railway passenger rates which terminated the 1897: discrimination against New York which had previously existed, and thereupon organized the semi-annual "Merchants' Reduced Rates Excursions," under which an average of over ten thousand merchants from the West and South have been induced annually to visit this city for the transaction of business with New York merchants.

It supported effectively the movement for currency reform inaugurated by the 1898: Indianapolis Monetary Conference.

It aided in securing the modification of the U. S. War Revenue Act as to the unequal taxation of mercantile corporations.

It aided greatly in securing the appropriation of \$6,000,000 for the improvement of the Harbor of New York by the cutting of the Ambrose Channel, now in use, which is named after its chief advocate, Mr. John W.

Ambrose, who was then a member of the Board of Directors of this Association.

It opposed and was chiefly instrumental in defeating the 5 per cent. Interest 1899: Bill, which would have tended seriously to drive capital from this State.

It secured important reforms in the administration of the New York Custom House, whereby burdensome delays were abolished; it secured the abolition of the oppressive rule requiring 10 per cent. of all articles on each invoice to be held for appraisement; it secured the abolition of the rule requiring duties to be paid on samples having no merchantable value. It successfully opposed reduction in the number of carriers and of deliveries in the New York Post Office.

In this and two succeeding years it opposed the proposed stoppage of the pneumatic tube service of the New York Post Office.

At the request of the executive officials of the government it actively assisted in formulating and promoting equitable trade relations with Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. It promoted important reforms in the Consular Service, essential to the larger development of our export trade in manufactures.

By the evidence it submitted to Governor Odell that the scheme was purely specu-

lative, it defeated the North River Bridge Grab, which would have granted vast rights without adequate regulation and with no compensation to the city.

It opposed and procured the defeat of the Ship Subsidy Bill, covertly framed 1901: in the interest of foreign built ships.

It promoted increased facilities in the present Post Office building, and improved postal service in this city.

In co-operation with the Executive Department of the Government and the officials of the Pennsylvania Railroad, it was largely instrumental in bringing about the arrangements whereby a new Post Office building will shortly be available at the site of the great Pennsylvania Terminal.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors, held February 25th, 1909, the first meeting after the death of Mr. King, the following minute was unanimously adopted:

"The death of Mr. William F. King, which occurred February 19th, 1909, involves a loss which it is difficult to measure or express:

To this Association, of its chief organizer, its first President, and its ever loyal and efficient member;

To the commercial world, of a leader in all that stood for integrity, high ideals, and successful achievements;

To this great community, of a citizen ever ready, with heart, head, and hand, to serve her interests, whether in opposing wrong or promoting good, in stimulating public interest in all that concerns the common weal, and in finding the ways and means whereby organized effort might be transmuted into accomplished results;

To his wide circle of personal and business associates, of a friend whose genial presence, whose kindly nature, whose unswerving loyalty and whose unblemished name they will long remember and cherish;

To those who were his fellow-members on this Board, of one whose presence, words and example will ever be an inspiration to carry forward the work and organization which he planned so well and to which he gave so great an impetus.

In the spirit thus implied, this Board records its high appreciation of the character and achievements of Mr. King, and its sorrow at his death; and directs this tribute to his memory to be placed upon its minutes, given to the public press, and transmitted in proper form to his family."



### Address by J. Hampden Dougherty

In presenting to the Merchants' Association of New York, on behalf of Mrs. William F. King, a portrait of her late husband.

By laws of life as unerring in their operation as those which guide the sweep of planets in their orbits, the character is indelibly stamped upon the features of mature manhood.

It needs only the instinct of discernment to trace the hidden things of the soul in the undoubted lines upon the face.

Avarice, cunning, passion, lust, petulance, misanthropy, write themselves upon the countenance as surely as do high and worthy traits.

Let no man lay the flattering unction to his soul that his follies or vices are known only to himself or his intimates; they are as patent as daylight to the discriminating.

Of all graphic arts none surpass portraiture in these revelations. The real painter gives you no mere transcription of lines, no mere reprint of features. The face he paints visualizes the soul. The lineaments of Philip IV as portrayed by Velasquez show you a haughty Castilian monarch, conscious that his subjects extended over three continents.

What birth and blood mean Sir Joshua Reynolds tells in numerous drawings of aristocratic English women. Rembrandt in his canvasses externalises inward character, exhibiting the quiet, poised, indomitable Hollanders, able either to reclaim a land from the advancing ocean or rescue it from the oppression of Spanish misrule.

In the portrait of the first President of this Association, those who knew him recognize the man, and those who had not that good fortune will find him disclosed. No friend need fear critical analysis of that face.

A genial, affable, straight-forward, manly, energetic nature, a good-humored vital personality, yet with a touch of the feminine that is explained by his possession of that rare masculine endowment, the faculty of intuition.

He was, as Carlyle said of Mirabeau, "A man not with logic spectacles, but with an eye." His mental vision instantly penetrated to the heart of a problem and the correct treatment of it, while others were groping their way towards its solution.

This faculty made him an invaluable friend and adviser in emergencies, as might readily be demonstrated, if the secrets of official life became public.

What Burke, in his speech in support of Fox's East India Bill, said in characterization of his friend, may appropriately be recalled,

as we look upon this reproduction of Mr. King's face: "Here is no mixture of deceit, of hypocrisy, of pride, of ferocity, of want of feeling for the distresses of mankind."

That transparently honest countenance suggests the antithesis of guile; there is in it no taint of craft, of Phariseism; nothing vulpine; nothing of the servile or venal place-man, "all tranquillity and smiles;" but there is the quiet consciousness of rectitude and manhood, without manifestation of arrogance; there is sweetness, not ferocity; and the sympathy and magnanimity that account for his many friends and explain his generous support of noble charities.

There is broad and large mentality, although perhaps not disciplined by severe scholarship; there is abounding energy and magnetism—the man of action, not the student. We seem to see the determined and successful foe of the Ramapo interests, the organizer of the Gold Money Campaign of 1900; the opponent of every corrupt special interest that battens upon the public treasury.

He was the creator of this powerful association, which for years was almost a synonym for his name. He was the type of man to lead movements for civic righteousness and his city and state are in more wholesome condition today because of his service and his influence. Faults he had, but as Burke said of Fox, they were faults that had nothing in them to extinguish the fire of his great vir-

tues. If his judgment was not always unerring, it was because of insurgent emotional impulses, essentially noble and generous. He hated oppression, he abhorred injustice and was impatient that gross moral obliquity in high places was not always amenable to criminal prosecution. His heart went out enthusiastically, almost quixotically, to those who had affinity for his views; and his disappointment was keen if they failed him. Failure! he would not allow the word. Courage, to him, was a large ingredient in every intellectual and moral achievement; and with courage, success was assured.

With George Eliot in the Spanish Gypsy he held:

"No great deed was ever done  
By falterers who ask for certainty,  
No good is certain, but the steadfast mind,  
The undivided will to seek the good—  
'Tis that compels the elements and wrings  
A human music from the indifferent air."

The impeachment of Warren Hastings was a failure, yet without it we should have missed some of Burke's and Sheridan's splendid eloquence, and Macauley's vivid description of the trial in Westminster Hall would never have been written. Many an apparently impossible victory has been won in the face of almost certain defeat. King was no weakling, disposed to magnify difficulties. He had the indomitable spirit and the proud patience which the gods are said to love.

His integrity was invincible. Neither detraction, nor abuse, nor adulation, nor seductions or bribes of any kind swerved him from his determination when once it had been reached.

Contempt is sometimes expressed for the reformer, the agitator; but the world is broad and the Garrisons, the Phillipses, the Kings, have been important factors in its progress.

To me has been assigned the pleasing duty of presenting this canvas on behalf of Mrs. King, to the Association which he organized, which he loved, and to which for years he devoted himself unsparingly. Those to whom he was endeared recognize that he belonged also to you. The gift is fitting. And these words of presentation contain no studied panegyric; they are the outgrowth of an opinion formed of the man from his actions and his character.

It is eminently proper that the portrait of the founder of this body should hang upon these walls, a constant reminder of his engaging personality, a stimulus to others to follow him in the path of lofty and unselfish citizenship. If this likeness with so much of the charm of the original could speak, it would urge you to be faithful to the ideals and principles that have made your organization so influential in its past. It would emphasize those wise words of the late Mr. Lecky: "The foundation of a nation is laid in pure domestic life, in commercial integrity, in a high standard of moral worth and of

public spirit, in simple habits, in courage, uprightness, and a certain soundness and moderation of judgment which springs quite as much from character as from intellect.

If you would form a wise judgment of the future of a nation, observe carefully whether these qualities are increasing or decaying. Observe especially what qualities count for most in public life. Is character becoming of greater or less importance? Are the men who obtain the highest posts in the nation; men of whom in private life and irrespective of party competent judges speak with genuine respect? Are they of sincere convictions, consistent lives, indisputable integrity? \* \* It is by observing this moral current that you can best cast the horoscope of a nation."

## Address by John N. Beach

On behalf of the Merchants' Club

It is very rarely that we come together here upon occasions of this kind, although it is by no means rare that we are called upon to mourn the loss of an esteemed and beloved member of this Association or of the Merchants' Club, two of the organizations represented in the Committee of Arrangements for this meeting.

While the membership of the Merchants' Club is kept intact by means of the names always to be found upon the Waiting List, yet there are many vacant places there—we miss many familiar faces of those with whom we were wont to delight to associate and “take sweet council together.”

When the time of our departure shall have come would we not each of us have it said of us, he was kind; he was considerate; he was gentle; he was true; he aimed to scatter sunshine on every hand and to leave the world a little better for having lived in it.

We are convened here at this hour to pay our tributes of respect to the memory of our friend, Mr. William F. King, a member of the Merchants' Club since 1885, and elected director in 1893, where, as in every position

he occupied, he was always ready to get under the load and to do his full part. Mr. King was no ordinary man. He was a positive character with no suggestion of the negative in his make up. What he did he did with all his might. He was eminently unselfish, and it was a subject of remark and wonder that he could devote so much time and energy to public interests without sacrificing his own.

Do you say he was self-centered and self-asserting,—true, but this within proper bounds was in his favor. No man ever amounts to very much who does not believe in himself and in his ability to do things. He was strenuous, impatient of delay, a man with an initiative and could lead better than he could follow. The merchants, the business men of this city, owe a debt of gratitude to William F. King.

When trade began to drift away from us, and the mercantile supremacy of this city was threatened, he came to the rescue and was fruitful in devising ways and means to stem the tide. Where a necessity existed he set about to supply it. He capitalized and launched a trade paper which sent forth the slogan, "It pays to buy in New York," and which rang the changes on this war cry, until it began to be felt and accomplished results, until now with its accretions and combinations, has become a mighty power with a staff, a plant, and equipment, doing magnificent work in the interests of this city. We found ourselves discriminated against and



handicapped by reason of the diversion of freight evil, and Mr. King headed an influential committee to take the matter up.

We secured interviews with railroad presidents and hearings before railroad commissioners and after a long and bitter fight we won out and had the satisfaction of knowing that this committee was not beaten on a single point.

We saw the necessity of a stronger and permanent organization to promote the interests of New York City, and in June, 1897, largely owing to the activity and indomitable energy of Mr. King, the Merchants' Association was founded, with Mr. King as its first president, which position he held for four consecutive years.

The history of the Merchants' Association, the work it has accomplished in the interest of this city and of this state and of this country will stand as a monument to the memory of William F. King.

During its early struggles Mr. King gave to it unflinchingly of his time and his money, and its work and influence broadened out far beyond the limits of its original conceptions.

We miss Mr. King,—“Billy King,” as we loved to call him. We will continue to miss him and it is meet that we should have assembled here today to pay our sincere tributes of respect to his memory.

## **Address by John W. Weed**

On behalf of St. John's Guild

We are gathered here today to give expression to our sense of the great loss which the community at large, and we his surviving friends, have sustained in the death of the great citizen and loved companion, William F. King.

You have had recalled to you his masterful qualities, which made him the successful merchant and a leading reformer. In mercantile achievement and in municipal improvement the sterner and more striking mental characteristics of our friend were displayed, and his high qualities of business capacity, unswerving integrity, and devotion to political principle produced results which will long linger in our memories, and will leave their impress upon our city's history.

But with all these mental attributes, there was combined one which I am prone to regard as possibly higher than any of them all, viz: that of sentiment, that quality which at times makes one feel that there is something more satisfying than financial success, something more inspiring than the applause of our fellow men, and something more noble than even the attainment of exalted station, for

with all these the consciousness of self-gratification is mingled as a lowering alloy.

Sentiment promotes the aspiration for the accomplishment of a purpose, which serves no selfish aim. Sentiment sinks self in the desire to serve one's fellow men.

Mr. King largely displayed this quality in his public activities, but it found its best expression in his charitable work. The distressing conditions surrounding the sick children of our city's poor, the little, helpless, pain-wracked child, deprived of all the comforts which affluence affords, appealed most strongly to his sympathetic nature, and compelled in him the devotion of his money, his time and his personal labor to their relief.

The avenue which he selected was the work of St. John's Guild, with its Floating and Seaside Hospitals. He was during seventeen years and until his death a member of its Board of Trustees and was ever active in the work of the committees of which he was a member.

His sympathetic interest did not, however, present the full sway of his business training, and he brought to the administration of the affairs of the society that business insight which, while it watched the proper expenditure of every dollar, still was willing to pay to employees salaries commensurate with efficient service. His sympathy with suffering, his generosity and his financial ability made him one of the society's most valuable

guides in steering it through the years during which he was connected with it.

One incident in his service as a trustee is typical of his earnestness, of his munificence, and, if I may use the term, of his clan in charity, as well as in business and in politics. As all of you well know who are associated with any charitable work, and I imagine there are few among you who are not, the calls for relief, for help, always outrun the limit of funds at command, and hence new schemes are ever being tried to turn the elusive dollar into the treasury yawning with emptiness. Under the stimulus of such a situation, Mr. King, some years ago, undertook to promote a theatrical entertainment, the net profits of which were to be handed over to the Guild. He worked day and night to make the enterprise a success, and many of you, I doubt not, were dunned to purchase tickets to help the good cause along, but alas! I have to record one failure of our friend. He did not prove to be a successful impresario, for when the accounts were footed up, instead of a profit the Guild faced a deficit, which ran, I believe, into the thousands. We never knew the exact amount, because Mr. King took the burden of the entire loss on his own shoulders. Not a cent was charged to the Guild on account of this misadventure, not one trip of the Floating Hospital was cut off, and not one child less was taken on board.

While his charities were not confined to the work of the Guild, yet his interest in it was so profound that after becoming connected with it his name was never officially associated with any other, and on behalf of that organization I am deputed to say that it is grateful for being permitted, on this occasion, to contribute among so many others, one wreath of praise to the perpetuation of his memory.

As we look over his career and consider the light he has shed upon every undertaking with which he was connected, while we may not liken it to the meteor's flash or to the glare of the noonday sun, yet we can say that it had something of the radiance of the aurora, and as that light lingers around the pole star of our system, so the light of his life always shone in those regions where we look for guidance in all efforts for the elevation of mankind. His will long be a living light as the poet says,

"And is he dead whose glorious mind  
Lifts thine on high,  
To live in hearts we leave behind  
Is not to die."

## **Address by Hon. George B. Cortelyou**

**Former Secretary of the Treasurer**

I have most vivid recollections of a previous visit to the Merchants' Association. Then you met in the days immediately succeeding a period of financial demoralization and of great unrest in commercial circles, to do your part as you had so often done theretofore toward allaying excitement and improving conditions in the business world. While this meeting today is designed as a tribute to one who had so large a share in the establishment of this Association, I can not but feel that such a meeting as that of November 14th, 1907, was also a striking recognition of his initiative and a vindication of his judgment. And so having been at that meeting I am glad to participate in this one.

Many of you knew William F. King better than I knew him. In fact, my acquaintance with him was only such as I have had with hundreds of others in the course of a somewhat extended experience. I did not know him intimately, and there were long intervals when his activities were directed into channels that were apart from my own daily environment.

*In Memory of William F. King*

Furthermore, when his interest was aroused by some national question my relation to the question was generally that merely of a citizen, and my dealings with him were on that plane and not in the sense that I was clothed with official authority to act on the questions which either engaged his support or incited his opposition.

During the administration of the late President McKinley and that of his successor, Mr. King was a not infrequent correspondent of the White House. It is unnecessary in this presence to explain at length that he had decided views, that he expressed them in emphatic language, and that he never failed to make clear his attitude.

On the problems that grew out of the war with Spain and the many questions of domestic concern that he felt affected not only the country at large, but the city in whose business life he believed this Association of merchants should exert a wholesome influence, he gave voice to opinions always decided and oftentimes helpful.

That he made mistakes, is undoubtedly true; but it is also true that he was always active in organizations that made for better citizenship.

Some men think to avoid mistakes by doing nothing, which is really the greatest mistake of all. William F. King was not one of these. However much some men

may disagree with certain of the policies he advocated we can all profit by his example of earnest participation in matters of public concern.

Some of us limit our participation in these vital matters to a general survey of the field of civic affairs and a liberal criticism of the acts of other men; but the number is altogether too small of those who seek to do worthily a citizen's duty.

The best tribute we can pay to any man whose activity has enlisted the interest of the people is to resolve to profit by the lessons of his life and to do in our turn the duty that lies at our door—of genuine public service that can be rendered by each one of us whatever may be our station in life.



Biographical Sketch of  
**William Frederick King**

By William R. Corwine

William Frederick King was a native of New York City. His father, Charles King, was of German descent, and his mother, Ellen (Elliott), came from sturdy Irish stock. William F. was their first child and was born in the Greenwich Village section of Manhattan Island, December 27th, 1850.

He had no further education than could be obtained in a public school, and at the age of 13 sought employment. He obtained a position as errand boy in a wholesale dry goods house, and after three years of service transferred his allegiance to the wholesale fancy dry goods house of Calhoun, Robbins & Co., with which he was connected as employee and partner until he died. He had learned that the last named firm needed a boy, and personally applied for the place. When he applied, there occurred an incident which gave evidence of his ambition.

After the member of the firm who had charge of the employment of the office force had questioned the 16-year-old lad and had told him that he might come to work, the latter boldly asked if it would ever be possi-

ble for him to occupy one of the desks in the private office.

Immediately all the partners who were present took notice of the youth and one of them replied, saying that it was up to him to qualify. The boy King then said that in due course he would qualify, and he did!

The determination to succeed carried him through the hardships of a junior office boy; it dominated him throughout his career and made him the prominent character which he became. His work was attended to with the utmost care as to detail, and it was not long before his employers began to watch him closely.

Their commendation of his activities in his humble capacity was shown by promotion. In due course he was sent on the road as travelling salesman, his territory being in the middle West. He was then not much more than a lad. Later he was called in from the West and given the territory of New York State as a salesman. He had outlined even then a policy for himself as salesman which in those days was unique. He believed that the quality of the goods and their prices ought to appeal to purchasers and that in selling it was not necessary to spend money in treating or to lose it at games with prospective buyers or to regale them with vulgar stories. At first he had rather a hard time of it in New York State. His sales did not approach in value those which had been

made by his predecessor. The firm was disappointed, and after they thought they had given him a sufficient test, told him they would have to transfer him to another line of work.

He begged for one more trial, feeling confident that in the long run he must and would win. He did win. On this trial his sales surpassed any which had ever been made by his firm in that State. He held his purchasers, added new ones, and before long was the banner salesman in his line in New York State.

On the trip for which he had pleaded, he made his first important sale in Albany. He had failed there each time before, but a merchant whom he had visited several times without success, told him that he liked his persistence, felt sure that he was right and that he would give him a good big order. After this experience Mr. King went behind the store and, as he expressed it, "cried like a baby," not so much because the entering wedge had been driven, but because of the kindness that had been shown him by this Albany merchant. He never forgot it or him.

Then he trundled his sample cases on a wheelbarrow to the railway station, the heavy cases seeming as light as feathers, and beating his competitors into Troy, made sales there for the first time. That was the beginning of a series of brilliant successes as a salesman.

He was admitted to the firm in 1875, and was a member of it up to the time of his death.

Mr. King's activities carried him beyond the confines of his office, although the details of his business would have been sufficient to have occupied the time and attention of any ordinary man.

He, however, was extraordinary in his quick grasp of detail and in his marvelous facility for disposing of work. The same characteristics which made him so effective in his business life were conspicuous in his public work. He was far-sighted, bold in conception, aggressive in action, absolutely honest in the minutest detail, and coupled with those characteristics was a winning personality which held his employees to him in bonds unusually warm and friendly. His men not only respected him for his ability as a merchant, but had for him an affection which was very marked and almost unprecedented in business life.

He had a love for his city which nothing could quench. He threw himself heart and soul into every movement for reform, with an energy and vigor which speedily marked him as a leader and carried him to the front of the fight. His first work of a public character was caused by what he believed to be a discrimination against the city of New York in the methods of routing freight by the trunk line pool.

A committee composed principally of dry goods merchants was organized to remedy the evil. Naturally Mr. King became secretary of it. At times he had to conduct the fight almost single-handed, but that did not daunt him. He fought on and finally won. His work in connection with his committee convinced him of the necessity for a larger and more comprehensive commercial body which could make more effective that which was necessary to be done for the benefit of New York City as a commercial, manufacturing and distributing center. The result was the Merchants' Association. The history of his organization of that body and of its activities under his leadership as President for several years are set forth in another place in this pamphlet.

The secret of Mr. King's success lay in his individual strength, based upon singleness of thought and action, honesty of purpose, intense, almost unlimited, activity, resourcefulness, absolute unselfishness, a far-sightedness which was largely intuitive, and loyalty. The following instance illustrates his loyalty perhaps better than anything else. While President of the Merchants' Association, a leading director of one of the largest trust companies in New York asked if he would allow himself to be elected to the board, the intention being ultimately to make him president. He was told that if he would do this, opportunities for a great fortune would be at his command. He replied that

there were two reasons which would make him decline. One was loyalty to his partners in Calhoun, Robbins & Co., with whom he had been identified since boyhood, and the other was that even if his loyalty to his partners had not estopped him, he could not accept such a position without being disloyal to the Merchants' Association.

The counsel for the trust company said: "Mr. King, it is this loyalty that makes us persistent in requesting you to join our forces." But he would not be persuaded. Mr. King never identified himself with outside interests to any extent, although he was pressed frequently, on account of his organizing ability and his personal aggressive activity, to join organizations of all kinds. He contented himself with a few clubs, which he rarely visited, a trusteeship in St. John's Guild, in the work of which he was active for a great many years, and in financial matters confined himself entirely to a trusteeship in the Bowery Savings Bank.

His work as a commercial traveler, as a member of probably the largest firm of its kind in the United States, his activity in civic work, his organization and direction of the Merchants' Association through many years, his charities, and his genial disposition gave him an acquaintance which extended all over the United States among all classes of men, representing nearly every walk of life.

In 1883 he married Martha Kneeland

Donalds, of Albion, New York. Mrs. King bore him several children. She and two daughters survive him. The elder daughter is Mrs. Edward H. Blanc. The younger is Miss Hildegarde King, who is at school in Paris, France.

Mr. King's health began to fail about a year before he died. He had developed a heart trouble. The doctors advised him to leave off all work of a public nature which was a drain upon his physical and nervous system, to drop such of his business as he could and to lead a quiet life. They might as well have told the wind to stop blowing or the waves to cease beating. He had the energy and ambition to do service which nothing but death itself could stop.

After taking a longer vacation than usual in the summer of 1908, he attempted to conduct his share of the business of his firm against the protests of his partners, who insisted that he should cut off all work for an unlimited period of time. The final break down came in November, 1908. The heart trouble became acute and from the day on which he was stricken he never returned to his office. He left the city in the care of nurses, but grew steadily worse, was brought back and died on the evening of Friday, February 19th, 1909.

The funeral services were held Monday morning, February 22nd, 1909, at St. James' Episcopal Church, corner 71st Street and Madison Avenue, in which he had been inter-

ested for a long time. It was the church at which his daughter had been married and for which he had a strong affection. The services were conducted by the Right Reverend Frederick Courtney, the rector of the church, who was formerly Bishop of Nova Scotia, assisted by the Reverend Ralph Bridges, curate.

The musical portion of the services was rendered by the full surpliced choir. The pall bearers were Robert B. Walbridge and James H. Smith, two of his junior partners; George L. Duval, an intimate personal friend; George C. Clarke, a life long business and personal friend; S. C. Mead and William R. Corwine, who had been associated with him in building up the Merchants' Association from the starting of that organization.

The church was crowded with his friends. The services were simple, as befitted the character of the man, for notwithstanding Mr. King's great prominence in the business world and in public service to his city, the state and the nation, he was as simple in character and habits as the most inconspicuous citizen in the community. The interment was private, the body being buried in his family plot in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Few men in New York City have been laid away from public sight forever mourned more greatly, more deeply and more sincerely than William F. King. He always rang true.









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